1: Jenness--48 (1913-16) 1922 Copper Eskimo
116, 648, 439

"The Copper Eskimos secured guns and ammunition and knives from the Akilinnik people in exchange for the skins of caribou, musk-oxen and foxes. Ilatsiak had bought from them a saw, an axe, powder for his rifle, two big snow-knives and a few things of lesser importance. At the same time the Copper natives obtain wood from which to make their sleds and weapons. Sometimes they stayed with the Akilinnik people for a year or two, and went down to Chesterfield inlet with them to meet and trade with white men; occasionally too, an Akilinnik native would return with them to Bathurst inlet. These inland natives, however, being ignorant of the method of seal-hunting on the ice in winter, could never remain for any long period with their northern neighbours, but were compelled to hasten south again in quest of caribou and musk-oxen."

"A little trading was carried on between the two groups [AW: a party of Copper Eskimos and members of the Puivlik Eskimo group] late in the evening of the first day, but most of it took place the following morning before breakfast. It was done individually, sometimes out of doors, sometimes in one or other of the tents. The northern natives brought polar bear skins, copper-headed ice-chisels, musk-ox skins and a few miscellaneous articles like polar bear mittens, which they exchanged for iron knives, tins, deerskin clothes, tent poles, etc., the regular price for an ice-chisel was an iron snow-knife. One of the Puivlik women exchanged a small knife for a stone pot, the northern woman being given an old pemmican can to serve her for cooking instead.(1)

Economically these northern Eskimos are of little importance to their southern neighbours, at least at the present day. Most of the things that are lacking to the natives of Dolphin and Union strait are more easily procurable from the Coronation gulf Eskimos during the winter, when they can be packed on sleds, than from the Kanghiryuak during the summer, when many of their possessions are cached on the coast and only what is absolutely necessary is ever carried inland. Musk-ox skins and ladles of

---

"1. Cf. Stefansson, My Life with the Eskimo, p. 273."

musk-ox horn can be obtained through the Coppermine natives, from the people of Bathurst inlet, while, as regards copper, the Coppermine natives themselves can easily supply all that is needed. In fact it would seem that the Coppermine valley, rather than either Victoria island or Bathurst inlet, was always the main source of the supply of this metal, the amygdaloidal nodules scattered over the surface being perhaps more numerous and more accessible here than elsewhere. At all events most of the Dolphin and Union strait natives possesssd one or more nodules from this region, which they had either gathered themselves or obtained by barter. From one Puivlik native we obtained a solid block weighing nearly forty pounds which had come from the Coppermine; originally it had been twice as large. It must be remembered, however, that iron has largely superseded copper during the last ten or fifteen years; and that while the softer metal alone was procurable the deposits at the head of Prince Albert sound must have been far more important economically than they are now.

The most valuable commodity that the Kanghiryuak natives furnish at the present day is the skin of the polar bear, small strips of which are in use everywhere for icing the runners of sleds, and in many cases also for footpads when sealing. Even polar bear skins however can be obtained by the southern Eskimos in other ways. Occasionally a stray animal wanders down into Dolphin and Union strait in the early part of the winter and is killed; or one will linger on the land near Cape Baring during the summer,

where the Puivlik natives in 1915 killed a mother and its cub. The animals rarely, if ever, penetrate into Coronation gulf, but the Eskimos of that region can obtain their skins by bar-[53] tering with the natives beyond Kent peninsula, where polar bears are said to be numerous. Altogether, therefore, the Eskimos of Prince Albert sound are at a disadvantage now in regard to their southern neighbours, on whom they are largely dependent for stone lamps, pots and wood."

2: Stefansson--68 (1908-1912) 1914 Copper Eskimo
116, 439, 174

"The lamps are of the type already familiar from Point Barrow. This is to be expected if, as the Mackenzie people say, the Point Barrow people used to buy lamps at Barter Island from the Mackenzie Eskimo who got them from the Baillie Islanders, who in turn got them from farther east. Lamps and pots were formerly costly in the west as compared with other artifacts, but are now cheap on Coronation Gulf, another thing that points to the Gulf as the source of pots, etc., used farther west."

2: Stefansson--85-88 (1908-12) 1914 Copper Eskimo
116, 436, 439

"All these [JMR: i.e., the Akuliakattagmiut, Haneragmiut, Kanhiryuarmiut, and Victoria Islanders] buy many bows, ready made, however, more especially the Victoria Islanders. In trade among themselves an ordinary seven-inch butcher knife (generally from Hudson Bay) is equal in value to a good bow with [88] bow case, quiver, and full complement of arrows, fifteen to twenty. A 'number One' steel sewing needle was worth about the same in 1910."

2: Stefansson--88 (1908-12) 1914 Copper Eskimo
116, 439, 221

"The Victoria Islanders east of the Haneragmiut, a few families of them each year, practise hunting in summer to the Coppermine and Bear Lake for the purpose of securing wood for bows for themselves and for trade, as well as wood for other articles. Besides this, they buy many bows, chiefly perhaps, from the Kogluktogmiut."

2: Stefansson--112-113 (1908-12) 1914 Copper Eskimo
116, 439, 324

"The making of a stone lamp is evidently not so difficult a task. The chief tool used nowadays is an iron adze, the iron being procured chiefly by tribe to tribe trade from Hudson Bay, although some of it is said to date back to the finding and plundering of M'Clure's ship on the north coast of Banks Island, which must have been somewhere in the '50's of the last century. When iron is not at hand it is said that tools of stone take its place. As all soapstone products are fragile and especially so the cooking pots because they are made thin, there arises continually the necessity of supplying new pots and lamps. In earlier times before the coming of the Hudson Bay trading post at Fort McPherson on the Lower Mackenzie broke up the chain of continuity of the coastal trade between Coronation Gulf and Bering [113] Strait, it is probable that the making of stone lamps and pots was an industry of far greater proportions than it is today. For, as elsewhere pointed out, it seems clear that this community and ones east of it supplied all the steatite cooking gear used to the west as far as Siberia."

2: Stefansson--113 (1908-12) 1914 Copper Eskimo
116, 326, 439

"Of the tribes whom we visited, the Kanhiryuarmiut are preeminently the makers of weapons and implements of copper. From the deposits northeast of Prince Albert Sound and from pieces of float which they pick up here and there they make long-bladed hunting knives, the ordinary shaped woman's knives, crooked knives for whittling purposes, copper rods for foreshafts of seal harpoons, points for ice chisels, blades for caribou spears, seal harpoons and arrows, prongs for fish hooks, needles for sewing, and nails and spikes used in the making or mending of articles of wood, horn, or bone. Naturally, they have more practice than members of other tribes in the making of these copper articles and they are the wares for which they purchase sleds and other wooden articles, which if they are from the Cape Bexley region come to them through the intermediary of the Haneragmiut while if they are from Bear Lake they come through the territory of the Puiplirmiut. Some of these copper articles also they take with them on their long trade excursions to the head of Chesterfield Inlet where they exchange them for articles of wood and even for certain white men's wares for although they do not meet white men of the Akilinik, they meet there Eskimo who deal with the white men of Hudson Bay.

Besides the sale of made articles of copper, there is also a considerable trade in raw materials. The chief of these are pieces of unshaped copper and the skins of summer-killed caribou. The caribou skins seem to go chiefly to the Akuliakattagmiut through the hands of the Haneragmiut in exchange for articles of wood."

11: Stefansson--249
116, 324, 439

(1908-1912) 1913

Copper Eskimo

"At Cape Bexley the previous spring we had noted the abundance and excellence of the stone lamps and pots and had asked the people where they got them. Their answer had been that sometimes they purchased them from people to the east, and sometimes individuals of their own tribe went east to the place where suitable stone could be found and made their own pots and lamps. This place they had named to us as Utkusiksalik, or the place where there is material for pots, and the people who lived in the district they called the Utkusiksaligmiut. We now found that some of the people in this village considered themselves Utkusiksaligmiut and that the place where the pot stone was to be found was the mouth of the valley of a small river, clearly visible from this village as a V-shaped gap in the high hills in the mainland to the south. From this quarry, or from others lying between it and Back River, must have come all the lamps and pots of the peculiar stone known to the Eskimo as tunirktak, found all the way from the Coppermine west to Bering Straits; and pending further investigations we may assume that utensils of the same stone found even in eastern Siberia among the Eskimo and coast Chuckcee must have come from the same sources."

"Right opposite where we now were, they said, was the pass they used once every few years when they had occasion to go to trade for copper with the Prince Albert Sound people.

The commodities which they carry on these trading journeys, they told us, were tent poles, sleds, ready-made bows, and the materials for arrows, as well as now and then a stone pot or a stone lamp which they had secured from the Utkusiksaligmiut. I inquired also where they got the wood to trade, and they said that some of it they either picked up themselves on journeys to Cape Bexley, or purchased from the Cape Bexley Eskimo; but that the best of it, and especially the tent poles and the material for bows, they got when now and then a family of their tribe went on a summer hunt to Great Bear Lake. This confirmed what we knew already--that the Victoria Islanders hunt habitually at Bear Lake, and that the presence of a few families of them there the summer that we were with them was no accident."

11: Stefansson--251 (1908-1912) 1913 Copper Eskimo
116, 439

"Through our inquires here we learned that a flourishing intertribal trade exists between Hudson's Bay and Kent peninsula, started by the Eskimo who accompanied Hanbury on his journey. Every winter now there arrives at the village of Umingmuktok on Kent peninsula a tribe known to the Coronation Gulf people as Pallirgmiut, named, as they say, from a branch river 'Pallirk,' which flows into the Akkilinik."

13: Jenness--83
116, 439

(1914-1916) 1917

Copper Eskimo

"There is brisk trading, in pots, lamps, weapons, skins, and other household furnishings. The desire to trade often impels them to make extensive journeys. From eastern Coronation Gulf they connect with the Nechillingmiut Eskimos of Back's River (4) and with the natives on the Arkillinirk, or Thelon River, (5) both of whom have direct relations with white traders. Since 1911 the Coronation Gulf natives have visited Great Bear Lake each year to trade with whites and Indians. Half a century ago the Dolphin and Union Strait Eskimos used to meet others that went eastward one hundred to one hundred and fifty miles from Cape Parry and Cape Bathurst to the vicinity of Wise Point, but since white men have established themselves in the Mackenzie Delta and since whaling ships have paid regular visits to Herschel and Baillie Islands, respectively at its western and its eastern portal, broadly speaking, the Copper Eskimos have lost touch with their western neighbors."

"4. Flows east-northeastward some 150 to 200 miles inland from the longitude of Bathurst Inlet ot that of Elliot Bay (96° W.), where it debouches.

5. Some 75 to 100 miles south of Back's River."

354 lamps of this type unless derived by them in trade from the Copper Eskimo, for
437 their convenient shape and large size caused them to command an extensive
439 market. Not only were they bartered from group to group throughout the Coronation Gulf area, but they were traded along the coast to the Netchilik Eskimo of King William Island, and westward beyond the natives of Mackenzie delta to Barrow.[1]

435 Their value naturally increased according to their distance from the source
354 of supply. Thus, on the west coast of Victoria Island, when the small 12-inch
322 lamp (Figure 55) fell and shattered its back rim, its owner, or more probably
237 her husband, did not discard it, as she would probably have done in Coronation
356 Gulf, but made an entirely new back piece of wood, which she lashed through three holes with cords of sealskin or plaited sinew.[2] The larger lamps, of course, were mended everywhere, sometimes with another piece of soapstone, more usually with wood, which was cemented with seal blood and secured with lashings.

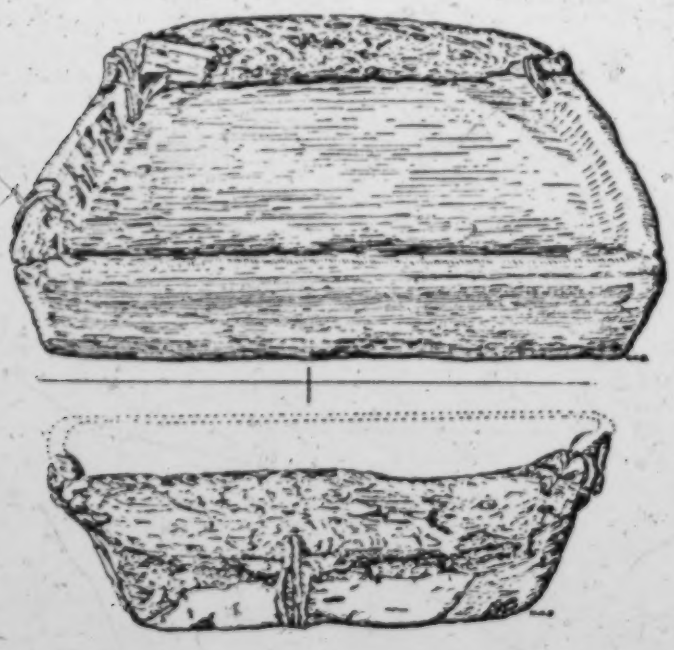


Figure 55. Lamp repaired with wood. IV.D.1560. Approx. 1/3.

354 The National Museum of Canada possesses two very shallow ellipsoidal lamps, obtained in Prince Albert Sound, that have no partitions, are rounded on the bottoms, inside and outside, and must be tilted forward to permit the oil to flow to the wick. One (Figure 56), 15½ inches long by 8½ inches wide, has been

[113]

[1] Cf. Simpson, John: The Western Eskimo: Arctic Papers for the Expedition of 1875, London, 1875, p. 257.
[2] The specimen is too heavily encrusted with blubber to determine the exact material of the lashings.

One (Figure 56), 15 1/4 inches long by 8 1/2 inches wide, has been fashioned from a basic igneous rock that seems to be gabbro; the other (IV.D.69), 12 inches long by 7½ inches wide, from an impure red sandstone. These two lamps greatly resemble some from Hudson Bay, and probably came from that direction; for although the Victoria Islanders commonly obtained their lamps from Coronation Gulf, they sometimes travelled south by way of Bathurst Inlet and traded with Eskimo in the vicinity of Back River.

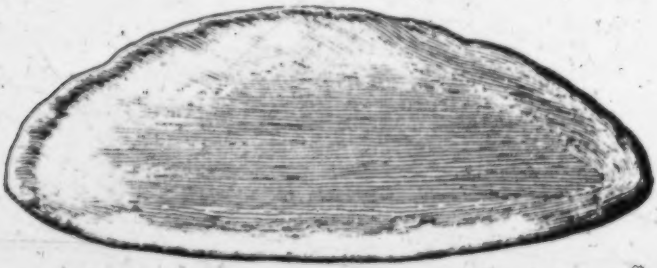


Figure 56. Lamp made from igneous rock. IV.D.67. 1/3.

In the snow-hut the lamp rested directly on two stout sticks laid parallel with one another behind the table. Care was taken to render it perfectly horizontal, or with a slight tilt forward, as a backward tilt prevented the oil from flowing to the wick. On one side both table and sticks were supported by an L-shaped board or strut (Figure 57) of which the long arm was driven into the snow wall near the door, and the short arm rested on the floor or was raised to the proper angle on a block of snow; on the other side, they were pushed into the side wall of the hut. Thus, both lamp and table paralleled the front edge of the sleeping platform, leaving a gap just wide enough for the housewife to slide into her seat.

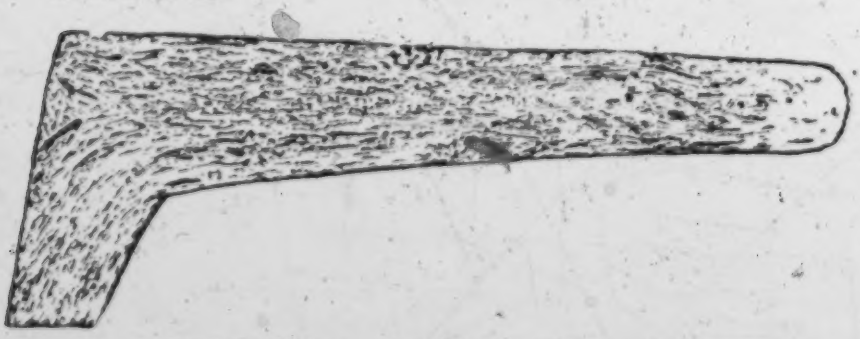


Figure 57. Strut for supporting table. IV.D.699. Approx. 1/12.

Occasionally a family lacked a proper strut to support the lamp and supplied its place with snow blocks. In the spring tent, too, the sticks and boards naturally rested on snow blocks because there was no snow wall to support them. In the late spring and throughout the summer, when most of the household furniture had been stored in caches and the Eskimo were moving over the land,

young girl. The specimens attached to the needle-case in Figure 93 are considerably shorter than the average. The commonest type was perhaps that shown in Figure 95, where it is also attached to its needle-case.

Threading Needles. Small bone needles were employed for threading a cord through holes in skin, especially for fastening together the front of a tent above the door. In form some of these needles were practically identical with many pins used for closing the blood bag, though the latter were usually longer and terminated in a greater variety of forms. Two threading needles are shown in Figure 103.

Scissors. Probably as early as the middle of the nineteenth century the idea of using scissors for cutting the hair of the head came to the Copper Eskimo from Hudson Bay natives, who acquired European scissors in trade with the Hudson's Bay Company and with whalers. Copper Eskimo specimens of fairly recent date had tin blades mounted with copper rivets on bone or antler. The best example I have seen is illustrated in Figure 104.

Figure 103. Bone awl. IV.D.1778. 1/1.

Awls. To punch holes in skin the Copper Eskimo used any pointed tool that was handy, e.g., the corner of the woman's knife, an arrowhead, a sealing skewer, or, occasionally, a mere splinter of bone. Specially made awls were extremely rare, but a bone one from Cambridge Bay is illustrated in Figure 105.

MEN'S TOOLS

Attached to the hunter's bow-case was a special tool bag to hold spare parts for the bow and arrows, meat skewers, and other implements connected with the chase. This bag naturally became the repository at times of other tools, such as the adze, that were not directly connected with hunting. However, most men

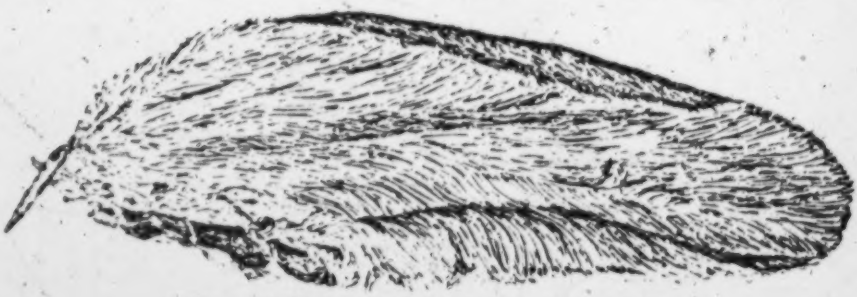


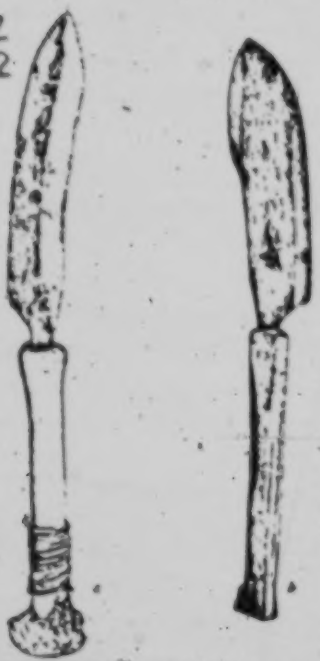
Figure 106. Man's tool bag of caribou fur. IV.D.726. 1/3.

owned a second small tool bag of caribou or other fur (Figure 106), and two or three had wooden boxes put together with iron or copper nails. Tools like the snow sounder and the ice chisel that were too long for any of these receptacles were generally stuck into the ground outside the tent, or into the wall of the snow-hut.

412
177
178
[439]

By 1914 hardly a single copper-bladed knife remained in the country, except specimens that had been manufactured for sale to the first traders, like those shown in Figure 109. All the Copper Eskimo were using iron knives of various sizes and shapes, some with small blades and long handles, others with long blades and short handles, some single-edged and some two-edged (Figure 110). Specialization in types was beginning. For cutting snow, knives with long handles and long blades were accounted the most useful; for skinning caribou and seals, knives with shorter handles and blades of medium length. Some natives still preferred two-edged knives for skinning, others liked a sharp point, curved back, and a blunt back edge, as in the European hunting knife. Many men made still smaller knives for miscellaneous uses around the camp. A [439] certain number of small knives with copper blades may have been used even in the earliest days,[1] but all such specimens that I have seen, whether of iron or copper, date from the twentieth century, and the copper ones were made to sell to Europeans. Certainly the commonest type of knife in pre-European days, perhaps the only type outside the whittling knife, was the large lanceolate form commonly called the snow knife.

412
172



412
325
[120]

[321]

[412]
[439]

Figure 109. Copper-bladed knives made for sale. a, IV.D.1361, 1/2; b, IV.D.243, approx. 1/2.

The older Thule inhabitants of the region, like those to the west and east, used a large, curved snow knife, nearly always made from whalebone. Figure 112 (IV.D.1660), however, shows a specimen obtained by Capt. J. Bernard in Coronation Gulf that is made from musk-ox horn. The local Eskimo knew its purpose, but had no recollection of ever using such a tool themselves.

Whittling Knives. Typical whittling knives (*havirɔ.n*) with iron blades are shown in Figure 113. Copper was used for the blade in early times, but I was able to obtain only two examples, one of which is shown in Figure 114. Here, as often with the iron-bladed whittling knives, the handle is perforated half-way along its length for the attachment of the sharpener, which was usually of steel, but in this case a small copper pencil mounted in an antler handle.

Figure 113*a* shows a fairly old specimen with a tiny blade of what seems to be hoop iron; the handle, as usual, is of antler, and the rivet in this case of copper. In the specimen represented in Figure 113*b* the handle has been extended by splicing a short additional piece of antler. The same thing has occurred in the specimen shown in Figure 113*d*, but such extensions were less usual among the Copper Eskimo than among the Eskimo to the west.

[172]

[1] In 1929 Mr. Lauvik Washburn obtained a handleless copper knife blade (Figure 111) that had been picked up on Victoria Island. One surface only was covered with a green patina; the other was still coppery, though dulled. Probably the specimen is not of great age.

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

181 The greedy white men wish to get hold of their
177 furs; but what do we give them instead? Our
439 products, some of which are of very doubtful value to them, indeed, and then our ghastly, insidious diseases, and often our bad customs and morals.

They had fitted their life into the conditions of their surroundings; with their old weapons taxing the game sufficiently to satisfy amply their requirements, without reducing the stock. Then we bring them rifles, nay, even magazine rifles, offering to buy the skins. The slaughter begins; the game, formerly so abundant, will in a few years be more or less exterminated, and the main condition that made their life possible be gone.

181 What a sad guilt we white men have towards native
177 races! But these people live in a land that will be of no value to us without them.

Let there be no doubt about it; they, too, are doomed if nothing really effective is done to protect them. The land of the great white silence will never more ring with the happy mirth of these lovable children of the twilight.

Surely the Canadian people and authorities will not allow such a thing to happen, when once their attention has been drawn to it. No one can be deaf to the thrilling appeal with which the author ends his book. May he be the harbinger of a brighter dawn in twilight land. The problem must be faced, but at once and with intelligent prudence, unless it shall be too late.

FRIDTJOF NANSEN

Lysaker

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

L'ENVOI

123 THE Great War was ended, and I sat at my desk again, absorbed in the routine of my every-day work. There was a knock at the door, and Girling entered, but lately returned from a five years' sojourn in the land of twilight. "Icehouse sends you a message," he said; "a message to the son who left her four years ago. She has heard of your marriage, and she longs for a picture of the strange white woman who is now her daughter. She wants, too, a bowl, a large agate bowl. But the picture she desires more than all."

Three years passed before the second message came, this time from Ikpuck. "Jennie your sister is married and has a son. But I am growing old. Come back and stay with me once more before I die."

177 What will the next message say, I wonder? The
[439] country has changed since 1916. Even while we said our farewells the traders were all heading eastward to the new land where beautiful white fox skins were valueless and a fortune could be gained in a night. White men have invaded it from every quarter, and the twilight of ignorance and superstition is yielding
[411] to the dawn of a greater knowledge. Bows and arrows have passed with other weapons into the darkness of

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

the past, and a new mechanical age has brought magazine rifles, shotguns, steel traps, and even gasolene engines. The caribou are passing with the bows and arrows; of all the herds that once crossed the narrow strait to Victoria Island hardly one now reaches the Arctic shore. Strange diseases are making their appearance, disease that the old-time Eskimo never heard of and for which he has no name. The stern laws of civilization have descended on the land; no longer is infanticide tolerated, or the blood-feud allowed to run its course. "Furs, furs, more furs," is the white man's cry. "Without furs there is no salvation, no ammunition to shoot the scattered game and satisfy your hungry children." The tribal bands where each man toiled for all and shared his food in common are resolving into their constituent families, and every family vies with the rest in the race for wealth and worldly prosperity.

Whither will it all lead? Fifty years ago the cyclone swept over the Eskimos of the Mackenzie River delta, and of its two thousand inhabitants a scant two hundred survive. Fifty years earlier it struck Baffin Island with a similar result. Will history, fifty years hence, record the same fate for this twilight land where for two years we carried on our mission? Were we the harbingers of a brighter dawn, or only messengers of ill-omen, portending disaster?

EPILOGUE

Within ten years of our departure from Bernard Harbour one third of them had been swept away by influenza, and of the hundred Eskimos gathered around the radio station at Coppermine no fewer than twenty-six suffered from advanced tuberculosis.

Was this inevitable? Had we been more conscious of our responsibilities could we have spared them so rude an awakening, so painful an entry into what we call a civilized world? Or does fate spin her web remorselessly, blind to human hopes and weaknesses, indifferent to human suffering?

The children of Jennie's generation who escaped the new diseases underwent a social and economic revolution. Even as we sailed away traders entered their country seeking fox-furs, always fox-furs; and for those pelts so useless for real clothing they offered rifles, shot-guns, steel tools and other goods that promised to make life much easier. So the Eskimos abandoned their communal seal hunts and scattered in isolated families along the coasts in order to trap white foxes during the winter months when the fur of that animal reaches its prime. Their dispersal loosened the old communal ties that had held the families together. The men no longer labored for the entire group, but hunted and trapped each one for his family alone. Their diet and costume changed: more and more it became the diet and costume of the white man. For they had to purchase their winter's supply of food from the trading stores, since trapping

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

left them no time to hunt seals; and they had to buy clothing too from the same stores when the rifles that the traders supplied them exterminated the herds of caribou or drove them into districts far remote. So the new barter economy—furs in exchange for the goods of civilization—made life harder instead of easier, more complicated instead of more simple. The commercial world of the white man had caught the Eskimos in its mesh, destroyed their self-sufficiency and independence, and made them economically its slaves. Only in one respect did it benefit them: it lessened the danger of those unpredictable famines which had overtaken them every ten or fifteen years, bringing suffering and death to young and old without distinction.

Today the youth of the second generation faces another revolution. The atomic age is reaching out towards the Arctic. On this coast and on that stand radar outposts to scan the upper atmosphere, scientific stations to study it and to measure the sun's rays. Already a handful of Jennie's cousins and nephews have found employment at some of these stations: they have unloaded ships and planes, driven motor-boats and caterpillar-tractors, and shown a competence equal to the white man's in operating civilization's simpler machines. Only opportunity and training are lacking to equip them for larger roles. They are adapting themselves, too, to our money economy, and learning to work for a daily wage. But when we who created this money economy igno-